



Christianity and Crisis

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Can We Organize the World?

A FRIEND, Rev. Mordhorst of Detroit, asks why *Christianity and Crisis* does not give unequivocal support to the World Federalist Movement. It seems to him, as indeed it has seemed to many others, that the Christian church should take the lead in a movement which challenges the idea of unreserved national sovereignty in a day in which it is obviously necessary to stretch our political loyalties to global proportions.

This question deserves an answer. The movement for world government takes two forms; according to the one it is assumed that the institution of world government would rob the Russians of their fear and would bridge the chasm between the communist and the free world. This project is simply refuted by the observation that no law or constitutional arrangement can supply the mutual trust which is the necessary basis of any community. The law in fact presupposes such mutual trust; and where it is lacking no constitution can function. The chasm between the communist and the free world is so deep that it can obviously not be bridged by any constitutional arrangement.

That is why only a very few abstract idealists hold to this interpretation of world government. The majority believe that a world constitution would be an ideal instrument for solidifying the resources of the free world and rendering it safe against communist infiltration. In answer to this proposal it must be pointed out that even if we eliminate the communist-democratic chasm there is little "social tissue" to bind up the so-called free world together. The most obvious cement is the common fear of all nations. This common fear prompts them into all kinds of *ad hoc* arrangements such as NATO and the proposed Pacific Pact, which do in effect erode unqualified national sovereignty and which do in fact establish community between them.

The question is whether more unequivocal constitutional arrangements would hasten the building of world community. To this question one must give a reserved negative answer in the light of previous experience. The history of India gives us a tragic example of the impotence of constitutions. The very effort to arrive at a common constitution

heightened the tension between India and Pakistan and insured that the Moslem and Hindu communities would found two, rather than one, nations. A contrasting example is equally instructive. The new state of Israel is composed of very religious and very consistently secular Zionists. There is a rumor that when it was proposed to have a constitution for the new state a wise man warned against the venture on the ground that each party would try to secure a maximum of security in the constitution and thus accentuate the differences between them. It was better, he declared, for the two parties to live together as best they could. This common life would allay some of the fears and would throw up some *ad hoc* forms of accommodation which would serve the future as a constitution. So it proved. Life is a better unifier than law. Law can only define and perfect what life has established.

In a day as tragic as our own it would be pleasant to believe that there is a simpler way than the tortuous process by which the nations are finding the road to community with one another. But the short cuts are illusory. Constitutional questions, before sufficient community is established, are divisive rather than unifying. How for instance would we decide how many votes Denmark, let us say, and the United States should have in a World Federalist senate? And what would the debate over that question contribute to the common defense against an immediate peril? In community building, as in other great human enterprises, the motto must be "precept upon precept," "line upon line." It is not a bad thing to spell out ultimate goals as well as immediate responsibilities. But we must be cognizant of the fact that some people have a habit of fleeing to ultimate ideals as a way of evading immediate responsibilities. For the moment, at least, the great moral issues for Americans is how a rich and powerful nation relates itself to a weak and impoverished world. Not in terms of ultimate constitutional arrangements, but in terms of immediate political policies. Some of the constitutional issues will be either irrelevant or sensible answers to them will be unattainable until we have accustomed ourselves to responsibility for the world community in our day to day decisions.

R. N.

Editorial Notes

ELSEWHERE in this issue we are publishing an article by Will Herberg on the Protestant-Catholic tension in education, which originally appeared in the monthly *Commentary*. Mr. Herberg, an influential leader among the religiously-minded Jews, who has a great influence among Christian and Jewish college youth, is concerned that the Protestant opposition to Catholicism on the school question plays into the hands of the secularists, who want to eliminate religion from education altogether. We agree with Mr. Herberg, but it is important to call attention to the fact that the Protestant church can not easily choose sides in this controversy because both Catholics and secularists advance claims in the name of democracy which are incompatible with democratic pluralism. The Catholic position is democratic in two senses of that term. It resists the claim of the state to enforce uniform education in the name of the right of parents to give their children an education according to their convictions. It is also democratic in the sense that a Christian viewpoint emphasizes the true dimension of the individual, as having his ultimate authority and fulfillment above the political community and the social process in which he is involved. Without this emphasis man is easily debased into a mere instrument of a social or political process and is left powerless to defy the majesties of the world with a rigorous: "We must obey God rather than man."

But it is only fair to note that our schools are secular not only because of the pluralism of Protestants and the inroads of secularism, but also because the Catholic church objects to religious instruction in the schools under any but Catholic auspices; furthermore the impulse to do justice to Catholics, by permitting them to gain the fringe benefits of buses, luncheons and textbooks, is lamed consistently by the refusal of Catholics to promise that the granting of those benefits will not be the entering wedge for larger demands, ending in the state support of Catholic schools. But such a disposition of the vexing school question would lead to the endless elaboration of parochial schools by every sect; and this would no doubt seriously impair the unity in a nation which is religiously as pluralistic as we are. The absolute claims of Catholicism are, in short, not easily fitted into a democratic framework.

On the other hand, the secularists make even more absolute claims in the name of Democracy. Instead of valuing the various religious traditions they would annul them all in the name of the unity of the democratic community and their secular viewpoint, which is, in effect, another religion with a total and consistent outlook upon life; this violates what Christians

and Jews feel to be the truth about man and his destiny. In the one case, the resource of democratic individualism is impaired by an ecclesiastical institution. In the other case, a so-called democratic community is made into an idolatrous center of meaning which violates the rights of the individual which it must be the business of Democracy to guard. In this situation there is obviously no consistent line of policy out of the difficulty; the supposition that a mere emphasis upon the separation of church and state will solve all difficulties contributes to the total secularization of our national culture, as Mr. Herberg observes.

Catholics and Protestants ought to realize that the mutual fear and mistrust in which they live is an offense to Christian charity and a scandal in the sight of scoffers and unbelievers. They ought to take steps to make contact between the two communities, at least as intimate as those which exist in the German Rhineland, for instance. They must, furthermore, take practical steps to liquidate the specific controversy in regard to education, more particularly the Federal Education bill. The most obvious solution of this problem is for Protestants to give up their opposition to federal aid to Catholic children and for Catholics to disavow public aid for the maintenance of parochial schools. To accomplish this result both sides will have to be more flexible in defining the standards to which they appeal. The Catholics ought to realize that no abstract standards of justice can overcome the historic prestige of an established institution, such as the public school. The Protestants must learn that no principle, such as the separation of church and state, is not subject to amendment in the light of new developments. The particular developments which challenge this principle are two. On the one hand the realization that absolute separation leads to the secularization of our culture, and that on the other hand the modern state with its wide taxing powers can not so easily be separated from any vital aspect of community concern as the fathers assumed.

R. N.

To Our Subscribers:

Beginning with this issue, the price of Christianity and Crisis is being raised to \$2.50 per year. This applies to subscriptions received after Feb. 2. The 500 subscribers who generously responded to Dr. Coffin's appeal for funds enabled us to wipe out our deficit; for this we are indeed grateful. But we are unable to cover anticipated rising costs through income from the present subscription rate. It is for this reason that the raise is being put into effect, in the hope that we will be less dependent upon our contributors. We extend our gratitude to those of you who have given us financial and other support during the past years.

THE EDITORS

The Sectarian Conflict Over Church and State: A Divisive Threat to Our Democracy?*

WILL HERBERG

ALTHOUGH it would be a mistake to see the situation primarily in terms of isolated issues, it is still worth noting that the most persistent occasion for Protestant-Catholic conflict in recent years has been the issue of church and state in education. In this problem many aspects are intertwined. Each is loaded with implications that range far beyond the particular points of conflict.

We must remind ourselves that the American public school system is preeminently the creation of American Protestantism. It was established because of the deep Protestant concern for popular education and assumed its characteristic "secular" form because of the American Protestant distaste for ecclesiastical control.

When the public school system first came into being in this country, it was non-sectarian rather than non-religious. And non-sectarian in those days meant all-Protestant, since non-Protestant groups were of relatively little social or cultural importance in most parts of the nation. It was taken for granted that religion, in the generalized Protestant sense, was the foundation of education, though the schools were not of course to be used to favor one Protestant denomination over another. In its *ethos*, the public school, as well as the community at large, was Christian and Protestant.

To a minor extent, this is still the case in some parts of the country. But by and large, under the impact of newly emerging social and cultural forces, the public school system has become something very different from what it was three-quarters or even half a century ago. By the end of the great immigration the country had ceased to be almost entirely Protestant; Catholics now make up a large part of the population, and so do Jews in certain urban centers. For these and like reasons, non-sectarian may no longer be equated with a generalized Protestantism; indeed, it has rapidly come to mean dissociation from religion as such. An important contributing factor has been the very considerable secularization of the Protestant consciousness itself in recent years. Administratively, public education today reflects the changing structure of the American community, with Catholics and Jews occupying positions of influence side by side with Protestants. Even more striking is the change in the *spirit* of

public school education, which today is no longer religious, neither Catholic, nor Protestant, nor Jewish; it is, by and large, *secularist*, even militantly so. The most influential educational philosophies and centers of teachers' training are self-consciously secularist, and so is educational practice in almost every part of the country. From non-sectarian, the public school has become "neutral" in matters of religion. As a matter of fact, many charge that this neutrality is no neutrality at all, that in effect our schools positively indoctrinate a substitute faith, arguing: "If you teach no religion at all, you are teaching a new cult, secularism."

It would be a mistake to think that most Protestants in this country have such a picture of the situation. Most of them take the "neutrality" of the public school at its face value, and indeed see little difference between what emerges from this "neutrality" and their own "liberal" Protestantism, which (I use the words of a well-known Protestant teacher) is "sometimes not to be distinguished from humanism or mere ethical culture." But many important Protestant leaders are deeply concerned, even alarmed. This concern, however, has resulted in very little, in part because of a confusion of counsel, but primarily because Protestant concern about the schools has been thoroughly bedeviled by an all-absorbing preoccupation with the Catholic "menace."

Catholics, on their part, never took the American public school to their hearts as did the Protestants. It was not of their creation, and did not in the beginning, any more than it does today, accord with their philosophy of education. Catholics cannot see any proper education for Catholic children that is not religiously grounded and religiously oriented, and that of course means grounded and oriented in Catholic faith. For the Catholic, therefore, the only really acceptable educational institution, particularly on the lower levels, is the church school, usually parochial in structure and administration. Indeed, probably half of the Catholic children of public school age in this country attend parochial schools; in 1947-48, there were 2,305,000 students in elementary church schools, 482,000 in secondary schools, and nearly 300,000 in more advanced institutions. The total number of Catholic schools was 10,900. The goal has never changed: "A seat in a Catholic school for every Catholic child." This is not a matter of varying "opinion"; it is a matter of conscience and canon law.

* Mr. Herberg's article first appeared in *Commentary*, November, 1952. This is a considerably abbreviated reprint.—Ed.

Increasingly, certain Protestant groups, alarmed at the effects of public school "neutrality," have moved in the same direction. Protestant religious day schools are by no means new to this country; in 1830, there were some 400 Lutheran schools in the United States, but these schools were motivated as much by ethnic cultural reasons (to preserve the German "language and heritage") as by religious; and to an extent, this is still true of the "Continental" churches in this country, though decreasingly so. The present-day movement toward religious day schools under Protestant auspices is predominantly of a religious character. Compared to the vast Catholic structure, the Protestant day schools still amount to very little: in 1951-52, the over-all figure was 2,904 schools, almost entirely elementary, with about 190,000 pupils. But this represented a 61 per cent increase over 1937, and the movement is definitely gaining momentum. Its philosophy is well expressed in the recent pronouncement of President Henry Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary: "Unless religious instruction can be included in the program of the public school, church leaders will be driven increasingly to the expedient of the church-sponsored school." The Protestant position, even where it favors church schools, is by no means so categorical as the Catholic. On the whole, Protestants regard the church school not as something desirable in itself, but as something which they may some day have to accept because of the "religious failure" of the public school. Protestantism is still "for" the public school, but no longer without reservations.

The spread of the religious day school has brought to the fore the problem of the relation of the government to such schools. This problem cannot be solved simply by repeating the hallowed formula of the "separation of church and state." It is agreed on all sides that the First Amendment definitely prohibits the *establishment* of an official religion, or government action in any way *favoring* one religious denomination over another. But does it bar any and every governmental action extending aid *on an equal basis* to all religious groups? To this there is no unequivocal answer. In the McCollum case (1948), the Supreme Court seemed to say yes, but that is not what it said four years later in the New York released-time case. We may leave the exegesis of Supreme Court decisions to the proper authorities; it is, however, a matter of historical fact that neither in the minds of the Founding Fathers nor in the thinking of the American people through the 19th and into the 20th century, did the "separation of church and state" imply unconcern with, much less hostility to, religion on the part of the government. Indeed, the promotion of religion was always held to be one of the prime objects of public education, and public education in this country generally op-

erated on this principle during the earlier part of its history.

It is simply not true, despite the widespread notion to the contrary, that there exists or has ever existed in the United States a "high and impregnable wall of separation between church and state" (Justice Black's words). The federal government has always given, and continues to this very day to give, direct aid to religious bodies, though of course on an equal and non-discriminatory basis. It pays the salaries of chaplains, religious functionaries selected by their churches and assigned to the various branches of the armed services; it has appropriated and spent money, at various times and in various ways, to spread Christianity among the Indians; it exempts churches and church institutions from taxation. As for church schools, provided they meet the specified educational standards, they are fully recognized and protected by law (Oregon case, 1925); their certificates and credentials are received on a par with those of public institutions; they are the recipients of considerable financial assistance from the public authorities (textbooks, Cochran case, 1930; bus transportation, Everson case, 1947; school lunches, National School Lunch Act, 1946). The question, therefore, is not so much *whether* church schools may be aided by public authorities, as *in what way* and *to what extent* they may be so aided; this question, however, cannot be answered with abstract formulas; there is, moreover, wide disagreement on it, not only among but within the various denominations.

The position of the Catholic Church is that church schools (of all denominations, of course) are morally entitled to receive aid from public funds on a par with the public schools because they too perform a public educational function. In addition to religious instruction, which is itself of public concern, these schools, it is contended, carry on a program of general education specified by public authority and accepted as fulfilling a public requirement under the compulsory school laws. Catholic parents complain that they are saddled with a double burden, being obliged to support the schools which their children attend as well as the public schools of which they cannot in conscience make use. Catholic spokesmen are emphatic in denying that they are "against" the public schools. They are quite ready to support them for the use of those who find them acceptable; they do, however, ask that their own schools, which they say occupy a "semi-public" status, should also be supported.

This attitude is more or less in line with the practice prevailing today in Canada, Great Britain, and other countries, where denominational schools regularly receive support from the public funds. And it has been advocated in this country by many non-Catholics, by some even who are devoid of any re-

ligious concern but are moved by considerations of what they take to be equity and the public welfare. I recall a surprisingly large number of people with whom I discussed the matter, people of all shades of opinion, who, "off the record" and "in principle," substantially endorsed the Catholic claim, but hastened to add that it was out of the question to advocate it in public at this time. And indeed it is, as Catholics themselves acknowledge. As a matter of immediate strategy, therefore, Catholics have concentrated on federal legislation to supply the so-called "auxiliary" services (social services, textbooks, transportation, etc.) to parochial school children along with those in the public schools.

Here they have come into conflict with much of official Protestant opinion. Protestants have tended to denounce all proposals to extend auxiliary services to church school children on the ground that they are merely disguised forms of "direct aid," thus constituting a breach in the "wall" that is alleged to separate church and state. The crusade for the preservation of the "wall of separation" between church and state in education as elsewhere is conceived by Protestants as a defensive campaign against Catholic "aggression."

This feeling, which most Protestants seem to share, is the key to the current embitterment of Protestant-Catholic relations. "The nub of the whole matter," comments the *Information Service* of the Federal (now National) Council of Churches in its September 10, 1949 issue, "clearly seems to be the fear on the part of non-Catholics of the political power and purposes of the Roman Church." This defensive psychology appears to be rapidly permeating American Protestantism. Practically every Protestant leader with whom I discussed the matter referred in vague but disturbed terms to the "ominous growth" of the Catholic Church in this country and expressed grave concern over what the future might bring. One, in fact, called my attention to the "portent" of a Catholic majority (52 per cent, he said) in Holland, a classic land of Protestantism. "In another generation," he exclaimed almost in anguish, "we'll be a minority; America too will be Catholic."

This fear of Catholic domination of the United States would at first hardly seem to be borne out by statistics. In the twenty-four-year period from 1926 to 1950, church membership in this country increased by 59.8 per cent, as against a 28.6 per cent increase in population. The Catholic Church grew by 53.9 per cent, but in the same period Protestantism increased by 63.7 per cent. Most of this increase, however, was accounted for by the expansion of the Baptists, especially the Southern Baptists. The churches affiliated with the National Council grew only by 47.7 per cent, falling short of the total increase as well as of the comparable Roman Catholic growth. It cannot be denied that in those parts of the

country in which Protestants and Catholics came into direct contact, particularly in the urban centers, the Catholic Church has been making notable headway.

More important even than the numerical growth is the comparatively vigorous institutional and cultural life of the Catholic Church, its really amazing skill in presenting itself attractively to the public, and the intellectual prestige it has lately acquired from the work of a number of artists, philosophers, and writers, mostly European. Catholic churches are full, where Protestant churches so frequently remain half empty. Catholic thinking, at least as seen from the outside, is aggressive and self-confident, whereas so much of American Protestant thinking, except on the very highest seminary levels, is thoroughly enfeebled by the abstractions of "liberalism" and "humanism." Catholic religiosity has "substance" and numinous power, while—here one can cite ample testimony from Protestant self-evaluation—much of American Protestantism is little more than an emotionalized ethic and gospel of social service. And finally, Catholicism possesses unity and a fighting front, while Protestantism is fragmented, divided, and apparently incapable of any positive cohesion. Protestantism, in short, has lost the initiative; it has been thrown on the defensive, and what is worse, it has developed a defensive minority-group psychology in which it sees itself threatened on all sides. All this is not my own judgment, although I would not disagree with it; it is substantially the analysis presented to me by a distinguished Protestant theologian, who expressed himself more concerned over the "loss of morale" in Protestantism than over the plots the Catholic Church might be hatching.

Now that there is no ground whatever for concern over Catholic power in the United States, Catholic power does constitute a problem for American democracy. It constitutes a problem first in the sense in which every potent special-interest group makes the workings of the democratic government more complex. Beyond that, it is a problem because the traditionally formulated political and social aims of the Catholic Church sometimes run counter to what most Americans hold to be the democratic way of life. The claims and pretensions of the Church to legal primacy, if not monopoly, in religion, education, and family relations, seem to many, as they do to me, incompatible, in their authoritarianism, with the liberal, pluralistic foundations of American democracy.

Equally disturbing is the Church's tendency to confuse, or rather to equate, the spiritual interests of Christianity with the political and social, even economic, interests and of the Vatican, the hierarchy, and the Church establishment. Catholics in America have sometimes employed the preponderance of

power that has fallen to them in certain localities and states in ways that have given much offense to other citizens.

All this may be granted. And yet the Protestant reaction has surely been far out of proportion to any conceivable threat or provocation. There has been, in ordinary Protestant thinking on the Catholic issue, little or no sense of the relativities of politics, little or no sense of the very considerable gap that often separates the phrases of a creed from the actualities of a concrete situation. Everything is painted in the strongest colors without discrimination or mitigation, so that the resulting picture is often grossly false even when some of the details are in themselves not very far from the truth. "Most American non-Catholics," Reinhold Niebuhr points out, "have a very inaccurate concept of Roman Catholic political thought and life. In this concept, it is assumed that if Catholics anywhere had their way, they would at once build a political structure as much like Spain's as possible. . . . Some forms of deduction proceed on the assumption that on any and every question a religious group's political attitude is dictated by its basic creed. Others do not even bother to start with the group's actual basic tenets but with the tenets which the group is imagined to hold." ("Catholics and Politics: Some Misconceptions," *The Reporter*, January 22, 1952.)

Consider the vast excitement over the "Vatican appointment." Whatever may be thought of the wisdom or the timeliness of President Truman's proposal to appoint an envoy to the Vatican, only by the wildest stretch of the imagination can it be regarded as unconstitutional or a threat to the religious liberties of any group of Americans. Yet American Protestantism reacted to this proposal with a violence and fury that have given thoughtful Protestants pause. The only unity of which American Protestantism seems capable, it has been sadly noted, is unity against Rome. The major "Vatican lesson," *Social Action* (Congregational) for May 1952 ruefully points out, is that "the psychological basis of much of American Protestantism lies in a negative rejection of Roman Catholicism. . . . The one emotional loyalty that of a certainty binds us together as Protestants . . . is the battle against Rome."

It is this Protestant negativism and defensiveness that has opened the way for the strange alliance between a considerable section of American Protestantism and the forces of militant secularism, an alliance organizationally represented by the Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State (POAU), launched some years ago under the auspices of *Christian Century* and a number of high Protestant dignitaries. It is this negativism and defensiveness that has made possible the "similarity" which a Federal Council of Churches report notes "between official Protestant pronounce-

ments and the typical secular position on all points discussed [in relation to religion, education, and the schools]." It is this that has driven American Protestants to interpret the separation of church and state to mean the abdication by religion of its responsibilities in large areas of social life and the abandonment of those areas to non- and anti-religious influences and control. American Protestantism has, in fact, conceded the primary secularist claim that religion is strictly a "private affair" and that culture and social life are to be built on humanistic foundations. But humanism and secular autonomy are now on the wane in many quarters, and so, by an astounding reversal of intention, American Protestantism, itself more religiously concerned today, has withdrawn as a religious influence in many areas, and thus has actually left the field free to the Catholic Church, which has naturally not failed to take full advantage.

This anomalous situation is very well illustrated in the attitude adopted toward public education. The theory behind public education is traditionally very different in the United States and Great Britain from what it is on the Continent, and the difference is instructive. In Britain and America, the government engages in public education because experience has shown that this is the only way to provide adequate educational opportunities for the mass of the people; the government is obliged to do what individual and group effort has not been able to do. But wherever individuals or groups (non-governmental agencies) can offer the proper facilities, they have the clear right to compete with the government and are entitled to recognition and encouragement by the public authorities. In other words, the Anglo-American system is pluralistic. In France and in other Continental countries, however, the concept of public education, at least as propounded by its accredited spokesmen, is something altogether different. Public education is there looked upon not as a device for making up the inadequacies of individual or group effort, but as a "natural" activity of the state designed primarily to inculcate a common doctrine and create a uniform mentality among the citizens. From this point of view, private individuals and non-state institutions (churches, for example) really have no business in the field of education; they are rivals of the state and such rivalry is held to be intrinsically "anti-social," even though under the circumstances it may have to be grudgingly tolerated. Of late, we have become increasingly aware that this doctrine, despite its popularity among Continental liberals and socialists, and its spread in this country, has a marked authoritarian, even totalitarian, potential.

The Supreme Court decision in the celebrated Oregon case (*Pierce v. The Society of Sisters*, 1925) made explicit the fundamental American doctrine

on the question: "... the right of parents to direct the rearing and education of their children, free from any general power of the state to standardize children by forcing them to accept instruction from public school teachers only." To this may be added a reference to a more recent decision (*Prince v. Massachusetts*, 1944) in which the Supreme Court declared: "It is cardinal with us that the custody, care, and nurture of the child reside first in the parents, whose primary function and freedom include preparation for obligations the state can neither supply nor hinder." This is a doctrine that goes beyond particular Supreme Court decisions since it lies at the foundation of any tenable conception of constitutional democracy and the limited-power state.

American secularist educators are by no means reconciled to this doctrine. They still feel that the public school is the only "proper" educational institution which all children should somehow be required to attend in order that they might be protected against "divisive cultural influences" and helped to acquire a "common outlook." These educators are constantly on the watch for some way of circumventing the intent of the Oregon decision. "A more satisfactory compulsory education law," Professor John L. Childs of Teachers College, Columbia, has suggested, "might be one in which the state would require each child to spend at least one half of the compulsory school period in the common, or public, schools. Many Americans hope that states will pioneer in legislation of this sort." Max Lerner is even more forthright. He has declared that "the first step [in breaking down the separation principle] was taken when the Supreme Court decided that a religious group could not be compelled to send its children to the public schools, and it could run its own schools at its own expense."

In a way, of course, Max Lerner is right. State recognition, toleration, and protection of religious schools is a breach in any *absolute* separation of church and state. But such absolute separation was never contemplated by the Founding Fathers, is not written into the Constitution, and has never been the policy or practice of the federal or state governments; it is simply the eager dream of those who have no patience with the traditional faiths and desire them replaced by their own non- or anti-religious faith. The startling thing is that so much of Protestant opinion in recent decades has tended to go along with this concept of separation, to the point indeed of applauding Paul Blanshard when he denounces Catholics for affirming that they would disobey a law banning religious schools and compelling them to send their children to the public schools. Surely it needs very little unbiased consideration to recognize that this attitude even though held by Catholics, is thoroughly in line with the best of democratic tradition, which has always tended to check

pretensions of the state to a monopoly of social and cultural life.

The fact of the matter seems to be that in its inordinate preoccupation with defending itself and America against Catholic aggression, American Protestantism has surrendered intellectual leadership to non-religious forces and has been fighting the battle for the separation of church and state under essentially secularist slogans. In making "Blanshardism" its semi-official philosophy, it has done no service to Protestantism, to Christianity, or to the cause of religion in general.

Nor has it done any service to democracy. For "Blanshardism," or rather the anti-Catholic animus it articulates, seems to me to constitute a much more serious threat to our democracy than any of the horrendous Romanist plots that Paul Blanshard has been so fond of conjuring up to make our flesh creep.

"This kind of reasoning," says Reinhold Niebuhr, who has never hesitated to criticize Catholic teaching and practice, "is highly damaging to the mutual understanding upon which a democracy must rest. Democracy requires more careful and discriminate judgments about friend and foe, and particularly since a political foe upon one issue in a vast welter of issues may be a friend on another." American Catholicism is not without its share of responsibility for what Milton Konvitz has called the "frightening growth of Protestant-Catholic tensions," but the major share, it seems to me, must be laid at the door of Protestantism, which has permitted itself to be maneuvered into an unreal, contradictory, and panicky position.

NEWS AND NOTES

A Distinguished Educator's Advice to His Faculty:
On The Threat To Freedom of The Mind.

"Members of the Faculty
Hunter College

Ladies and Gentlemen:

"Certain recent happenings which have resulted from inquiries into subversive activities by Government agencies may well give rise to quite unwarranted fears, and therewith to curtailment of educational activities which must be encouraged if public opinion in the United States is to remain vigorous and forthright. I have some reason to believe that these anxieties are not absent from the campus of Hunter College. This letter is an attempt to clarify the situation."

"The character of the Communist Party has led to the passage of legislation designed to curtail its potential influence. Hunter College and its sister institutions are affected in particular by the City Charter, Section 903 of which has been held by the courts to mean that failure to answer questions about membership in the Communist Party when those questions are put by a duly constituted investigative body automatically leads to

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dismissal from employment by the City. All this has been very well known for some time. The Board of Higher Education could not, even if it desired to do so, disregard this mandate.

"There are, however, no laws and no rulings by the Board which constitute any sort of limitation on the non-Communist civic and intellectual interests of the Faculty, with this exception: attacks on the race or religion of any student are forbidden. This does not mean that a chance remark or an expression of opinion on a controversial subject will be made an issue. Your College administration will defend to the uttermost any member of the staff from suspicion or retaliation except in those instances in which a chronic seizure of vocal prejudice is indicated.

"In every other respect the Faculty should not only feel entirely free to act as responsible citizens but, indeed, must be convinced that such conduct is indispensable. When I hear that younger members of the staff,

particularly those without tenure, are warned not to act as faculty advisers to student clubs having a political character, I am deeply shocked. No victory the Communist Party could possibly win in this country would be more decisive than would be success in depriving younger instructors of an opportunity to give the leadership which only they can provide. After one has reached a certain age, one acquires for students a manifest august dignity which usually consorts poorly with what they look upon as club life. We must therefore rely on our less venerable colleagues for assistance in this vitally important matter.

"Far from gazing upon willingness to share in student enthusiasms and even in student mistakes as an indication of brashness, I am hereby insisting to all Chairmen and Administrative Officers of the College that they look with special benevolence on those members of the staff who do not succumb to current fears but who roll up their sleeves and go to work. Suppose the situation does involve certain dangers. If we can ask a Marine to go up a Korean hill with a grenade in each hand, we can surely expect an instructor in Hunter College not to tremble for the safety of his wife and children if he sits down on an evening and listens to students discuss General Eisenhower or the size of the New York City welfare budget.

"I came to Hunter College in 1939. Since then I have sometimes been troubled and occasionally annoyed. But nothing that has been said about the College in all these years is more disturbing than are the reports alluded to above. I shall hope they are not true. And I shall look forward to receiving evidence to that effect."

GEORGE N. SHUSTER,
President.

CORRESPONDENCE

We are publishing today the question put to us by Dean A. Mordhorst from Detroit.

Sirs:

I am losing interest in *Christianity and Crisis* because I believe it is not speaking clearly on the subject of strengthening the United Nations. Dr. Niebuhr did not make himself clear in his latest book, "The Irony of American History," as to just what kind of federalist plans he opposes. Certainly there are dreamers in this field, like the proponents of federal government who would control natural resources, emigration, tariff and currency, as well as arms, in one "clear act of political will." Certainly that is not a realistic goal for our century.

However, I deeply wish that *Christianity and Crisis* would make an analysis of the program such as the United World Federalists propose.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

DEAN A. MORDHORST.

Author In This Issue

Will Herberg is a leading lay theologian who is equally influential in Jewish and Christian circles. His book *Judaism and Modern Man: An Interpretation of Jewish Religion* was published recently.

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